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Notice of Opportunity to Comment

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Forest Plan Amendment 12 - Ocala National Forest Management
Area Reassignment

USDA Forest Service

National Forests in Florida

The Forest Service is proposing to reassign approximately 50,000ac. of land in the Ocala National Forest currently designated as Management Area (MA) 8.2 (Sand pine timber management) to MA 8.4 (Florida scrub-jay management). This proposal would also revise the desired conditions for MA 8.4. No specific management activities are proposed and any projects implementing these potential changes would be subject to future public involvement. Because the proposed action would amend the Forest Plan, the Forest Supervisor, Kelly Russell, is the agency official responsible for making a decision on this project.

Pursuant to 40 CFR 1501.7 and 36 CFR 219.16, the National Forests in Florida welcome your substantive comments regarding the scope of the proposed action, potential environmental effects or potential alternatives. The publication of this legal notice marks the start of a public scoping period and comments will be accepted until December 7, 2015. Pursuant to 36 CFR 219.16(a)(2), a 30-day notice and comment period expected in early 2016 will provide an opportunity to submit comments on preliminary analysis of project alternatives. Commenting during either period may grant the commenter standing to object to the decision under the process described in 36 CFR 219, Subpart B. The names and addresses of commenters and the content of comments will be part of the public record for this project.

We encourage submission of comments by email. Comments in a common digital format (e.g., attached MS Word document or pdf, or in the body of the email) should be sent to comments-southern-florida@fs.fed.us with "Forest Plan Amendment 12" as the subject. Written comments on this proposal should be sent to: Kelly Russell, National Forests in Florida, 325 John Knox Rd. Ste. F-100, Tallahassee, Florida 32303. Oral or hand-delivered comments must be received within our normal business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Thursday and 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Friday, closed on federal holidays.

More information and maps of the current and proposed Management Areas are available on the project website (<http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=48051>) or upon request (contact Matthew Trager, mdtrager@fs.fed.us or 850-523-8582).

November 9, 2015

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